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EDITORIAL ANNOTATIONS.

IT IS August. The hot sun streams in on the heavy wool draperies, drawn closely over the windows, in fruitless endeavor to shut out the heat and glare of the sultry mid-day. The thick-pile carpet on the floor seems fairly to "sizzle" with the heat, and the deeply upholstered chairs and sofas are far from inviting, with their purport of humidity and unrest. Within, poor suffering humanity strains every nerve in seeking coolness, and in the struggle (gaining but desperation) succumbs in the end to headache and ill temper. *Pere de famille*, home for the afternoon, seeks restlessly a cool spot, but seeks in vain. The dining-room, parlor and sitting-room have all proved futile, and at last we find him here in the darkened library, grim, dishevelled, uncomfortable and ugly, *sans* comfort—and, in consequence, *sans* dignity and self-respect.

THE deep, rich red wall paper, so suggestive of warmth in the winter months, appears to his tired eye to simmer and glow with a fitful iridescence painfully suggestive of molten iron. The heavy draperies hang limp and dejected from their poles of polished ebony, and even the portrait of a "respected ancestor" on the wall above the piano seems to his weary, heated brain to leer maliciously from its protecting folds of unromantic mosquito netting. The weary eye finds no comforting spot on which to rest; everywhere there is the same suggestion of heat and discomfort, and as he sits worn and exhausted, with half-consumed cigar hanging listlessly from nerveless fingers, he sadly meditates.

"CAN this be the cosy room that only a few short months ago was the pride of my heart—so comfortable, so cheery and bright of a winter evening? It is, indeed; but, alas! there is no comfort here now." And with bitter thoughts of his present discomfort, nervously crushing his burned-out cigar between set teeth, he seeks coolness and comfort elsewhere. Is there no other remedy for this state of affairs? There surely is, and a very simple one. Make your home "livable" in summer as well as winter.

To those who are obliged from one cause or another to spend the summer months in the town or city home, this summer problem is truly a terrible stress. But that the same condition should exist both in hot and

cold weather is wholly unnecessary. However limited the means, there is much that can be done to make life bearable during this unpleasant and unavoidable "heated spell." As the human mind is peculiarly susceptible to external influences, there is no reason why these should not be considered in the home, and conditions made appropriate to the seasons.

FOR the first step in this direction, close every room not absolutely necessary for use and comfort. Of course the careful housewife will sweep, dust and cover before so doing, and a weekly inspection will keep all as it should be. In these rooms may be stored all that is superfluous from the living-rooms—the hot, stuffy chairs and sofas not absolutely necessary for comfort—such as remain should be fitted with slip covers of linen. This is refreshing, both to the eye and the senses. Carpets should be removed in these living-rooms, if possible, and straw matting substituted; these are inexpensive and pretty, and are most desirable in every way during the "hot spell." Should these not be available, the bare floor, if in good condition, may be well oiled, a few rugs—even home-made ones—scattered here and there, and found far more agreeable than the carpet, with its suggestion of heat and dust. Should circumstances warrant the carpet remaining, cover it, after sweeping well, with the thick, heavy, dark gray linen, which may be taken up and shaken at intervals, and will be found a cool and refreshing substitute.

NOW remove all heavy draperies. Simple, cool and airy effects in the windows are much more desirable, and these may be brought about by the use of the pretty muslins or other dainty summer goods so numerous and inexpensive nowadays. With these simple suggestions as a foundation, the good sense and necessities of the housewife will add the detail, and *père de famille* will find the desired rest and sense of coolness at home, without resource to the club or summer garden.

IT IS a well-known fact that colors have their effect on the eye and senses. Certainly colors such as reds, yellows, warm browns and rich reddish purple (also certain tones of olive in which the yellow predominates) impress us with a sense of warmth, consequently are to be avoided as much as possible in hot weather. On the other hand, the cool grays, greens, soft lavenders and blues affect us with a feeling of coolness even with the atmosphere at a high temperature. Such being the case the mind is not disturbed, and the nerves at rest; consequently there is a subtle purport of comfort derived from their use. We all know the effects of red on the "mad bovine," and much the same result is evident with the individual, especially in hot weather, unless toned down and neutralized by the use of the cooler colors. There seems to be something paradoxical in talking of color in connection with comfort. The fact, however, exists, and, as it does exist, should be made use of. A little reflection may convince us that the eye is a very sensitive organ, and through its medium are we indebted, in a great measure, for many of the pleasures and discomforts of life.

NOW let us return to our "home comfortable." All that can be done for bodily comfort within doors will not help us through the close, muggy evenings, when a light, however dim, is far too suggestive of heat. To be sure, the front steps are available at such times, but there is an element of publicity about them not altogether inviting. "What can we do? We must have the air, and it is too hot to walk about." There is the roof! Why not make use of that? Every city house has its flat extent of "leads"—hot and uninvit-

ing during the daytime, no doubt, but after sundown there is a difference. There may be found fresh air—if anywhere—above the heat and turmoil of the street; there, also, may be found room for expansion, absolute seclusion and—what? "Decorative possibilities"? Most assuredly; let us consider them.

IT IS a hot August evening. On the roof of a "downtown" New York residence are gathered the family and a few chosen friends. In the rooms below, and in the street, there is little if any air stirring, and no comfort. But here how different. A gentle breeze from the Southwest is just springing into existence, fanning the fevered brow with the sweet sense of its freshness. Away to the West the twinkling lights of Jersey City and the adjacent towns, emphasized here and there, by the green and red lanterns in the ferry slips on the river front, meet the eye agreeably; to the South the glittering dome of the World Building stands boldly forth from the gray, misty background of the Bay, and the beautiful illuminated cross of the Washington Square Church, towers, an emblem of hope and love, above the lesser lights. Far over on the Orange hills a thunder-storm fills the sky at intervals with a brilliant glow, and the subdued rumble of the storm-clouds suggests added coolness, with its distant purport of refreshing downpour. From the quiet streets below float upward the familiar strains of "Annie Laurie" from childish voices, sweetened and subdued by distance and space. Overhead the stars shine dimly, and a few fleecy, low-lying, idly-floating clouds catch and reflect the glow from the myriads of lights in the city beneath. A brilliant, yet subdued and restful setting; restful both to eye and mind after the heat and toil of the day.

AND on the roof? Boxes filled with flowers and ferns; ivy, growing freely over a light trellis work, surround all available space. There are plenty of cane chairs, wooden benches and small tables, and here and there a hammock swinging across the corners. Each member of the family has his or her chosen spot. On the side facing the river *père de famille* sits stretched at ease in a low steamer chair—*sans* coat only, as comfort of surroundings brings ease of mind. With cigar and cooling drinks close at hand, congenial friends, and easy good-will, the questions of the hour, "gold" or "16 to 1," are under full discussion. Further back near the skylight sits the Mater; a screen at her back precludes the possibility of a draught, and adds to the picturesqueness of the scene. Here, with a chosen friend or two of her own sex and years, friendly gossip and iced tea are indulged in, while with easy grace she presides over the cooling light refreshments, placed on a low table near at hand. Seated in groups here and there the young folks chatter, laugh and make merry, and have no end of fun, while the maid, gladly relieved from the confinement of the rooms below, flits from group to group serving all to their hearts' desire.

"HORA FUGIT;" and as the evening passes into the night the voices seek a lower key. The restful influence of the quiet night is felt by all. The moment for home-leaving has come. A trained hand sweeps the guitar strings with soft preliminary chords; a low, rich voice glides into sweet familiar song, in which others join in harmonizing unison. It is a fitting ending of a happy night, and one and all seek repose, refreshed and invigorated in body and mind. A meet state in which to face the heat and trials of the coming day. Does it pay, for the little trouble and expense necessary? Try it and judge for yourself.